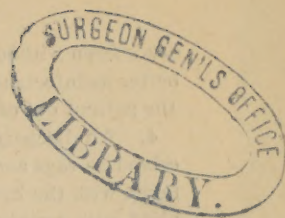


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HOW TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF SMALL-POX

Office of the STATE BOARD OF HEALTH,

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., June, 1881.

Although there is no contagion more powerful or certain, experience has taught that the spread of small-pox may be absolutely prevented by a strict observance of the following

RULES.

1. On the first report of the existence of a case in a region, systematic vaccination or re-vaccination of every member of the exposed communities in such region should be at once resorted to.

2. Whenever it is known that any person is sick with small-pox or varioloid, isolation of the individual should be promptly and rigidly enforced. Every one in the house should be vaccinated or re-vaccinated, no matter how recently this may have been done, nor how mild the disease may appear. In towns or cities where there are small-pox hospitals, it is better that the patient should be removed to such at once. Where there is no such provision, the infected house should be strictly quarantined, and, if necessary, the police authority must be invoked to secure proper restrictions. An improvised hospital will be an absolute necessity if the case occurs in a crowded family or tenement-house, where proper isolation cannot be secured. In such case, a barn, outhouse or other building may be made sufficiently comfortable for the patient, at small expense; or, if the weather be mild enough, a tent may be used. A flag or placard, bearing the words "SMALL-POX," should be prominently displayed upon the house, and not removed until permission is given by the health authorities. *Isolation is a matter of the utmost importance.*

3. The room selected for the sick should be large, easily ventilated, and as far from the living- and sleeping-rooms of other members of the family as it is practicable to have it. All ornaments, carpets, drapery, and articles not absolutely needed in the room, should be removed. A free circulation

of air from without should be admitted, both by night and day—there is no better disinfectant than pure air. Care should, of course, be taken to keep the patient out of draughts.

4. All discharges from the nose and mouth of the patient should be received on rags and immediately burned, and the same precaution should be taken with the crusts as they fall off. Night-vessels should be kept supplied with a pint or two of a solution of carbolic acid—one gill of crude carbolic acid to half a gallon of water; or of chloride of zinc—an ounce and a half of the chloride to half a gallon of water. The discharges from the kidneys and bowels, received in these vessels, should be buried at least one hundred feet from any well or spring. All spoons, dishes, etc., used or taken from the sick-room, should be put in boiling water at once. Cleanliness in everything must be scrupulously enforced.

5. Not more than two persons—one of them a skillful, professional nurse, if possible—should be employed in the sick-room, and their intercourse with other members of the family and with the public must be as much restricted as possible. In the event that it becomes necessary for an attendant to go out of the house, a complete change of clothing should be made, using such as has not been exposed to infection; the hands, face and hair should be washed in water to each half gallon of which has been added a tablespoonful of spirits of thymol*, or two tablespoonsful of carbolic acid, or half a gill of a ten per cent. solution of permanganate of potassium. Following this, free exposure to the open air should be secured before approaching any one.

6. Physicians and other necessary visitors, before entering the sick-room, should put on an outer garment, closely buttoned up, and a handkerchief or wrap about the throat and neck. Such outer garment may be a linen duster or rubber overcoat; and this, together with the neck-wrap, should be taken off in the open air immediately after leaving the sick-room, and either be dipped in the disinfecting fluid hereafter described, or hung up out of doors until the next visit. Safety consists in exposing to the open air every article of clothing that has been in any way subject to the contagion. Whenever practicable the precautions above prescribed (*Rule 5*,) for an attendant leaving the sick-room, should be observed by the physician or visitor. Doctors and clergymen may convey contagion as readily as the laity under similar conditions; they should, therefore, take the same precautions.

7. No inmate of the house, during the continuance of the disease, should venture into any public conveyance, or assemblage, or crowded building, such as a church or school; nor, after its termination, until permission is given by the attending physician. Letters should not be sent from the patient, and all mail matter from the house should first be subjected to a dry heat of 250-260 deg. F. Domestic animals, dogs, cats, etc., should not be allowed to enter the room of the patient, or, better still, should be excluded from the house.

**Spirits of thymol*, for this purpose, may be made by adding one ounce of thymol to three ounces of alcohol, 85 per cent. This disinfectant is free from the disagreeable odor of carbolic acid, and is quite as efficient.

8. After recovery has taken place the patient should be bathed daily, for three or four days, in a weak disinfectant—the thymol water above described, or a solution of chloride of zinc (two drachms of the salt to half a gallon of water.) The head should be thoroughly shampooed during each bath, and the convalescent be then clothed in fresh, clean garments that have been in no way exposed to the infected air. Some time must elapse—ten to fourteen days according to the severity of the case—before the danger of communicating the disease is past, and patients should be kept in the house at least two weeks after the crusts have all disappeared.

9. In the event of death, the clothing in which the body is attired should be sprinkled with strong carbolic acid, and the body wrapped in a disinfectant cerecloth* and placed in an air-tight coffin, *which should remain in the sick-room until removed for burial.* No public funeral should be allowed either at the house or church, and no more persons should be permitted to go to the cemetery than are necessary to inter the corpse.

10. After recovery or death all articles worn by, or that have come in contact with, the patient, together with the room and all its contents, should be thoroughly disinfected by the burning of sulphur or the pouring of crude carbolic acid on chloride of lime. To do this, have all windows, fire-places, flues, key-holes, doors and other openings securely closed by strips or sheets of paper pasted over them. Then place on the hearth or stove, or on bricks set in a wash-tub containing an inch or so of water, an iron vessel of live coals, upon which throw three or four pounds of sulphur; or place a number of plates of chloride of lime (say six feet apart,) in different parts of the room, and pour on them crude carbolic acid. All articles in the room, and others of every description that have been exposed to infection, and are too valuable to be burned, yet cannot be washed nor subjected to dry heat, must be spread out on chairs or racks—mattresses or spring beds set up so as to have both surfaces exposed; window-shades and curtains laid out at full length, and every effort made to secure thorough exposure to the sulphur or chlorine fumes. The room should then be kept tightly closed for twenty-four hours. After this fumigation—which it will do no harm to repeat—the floor and woodwork should be washed with hot water, the walls and ceiling whitewashed, or, if papered, the paper should be removed. The articles which have been subjected to fumigation should be exposed for several days to sunshine and fresh air. If the carpet has unavoidably been allowed to remain on the floor during the illness, it should not be removed until after the fumigation, but must then be taken up, beaten and shaken in the open air, and allowed to remain out of doors for a week or more. If not too valuable, it should be destroyed; but, whenever practicable, it should be removed from the room at the beginning of the illness. After the above treatment has been thoroughly enforced, the doors and windows of the room should be kept open as much as possible for a week or two. Where houses are to some extent isolated, judgment can be used in exposing articles out of doors. The entire contents of the house should be subjected to the greatest care, and when there is any doubt as to the safety of an article *it should be destroyed.* The privy should be thoroughly disinfected, during the entire illness, with copperas solution—prepared by dissolving about sixty pounds of copperas (suspended in a basket) in a barrel of water; three to five gallons of this solution, to which may be added a pint of crude carbolic acid, should be thrown into the vault every three or four days. Water closets should be disinfected by pouring a quart or so of this solution into the receiver after each use.

* This may be a sheet thoroughly soaked in the disinfecting fluid described in Rule II—only of double strength: that is, eight ounces sulphate of zinc and four ounces common salt to one gallon of water.

11. Such articles of clothing, bedding, etc., as can be washed, should first be treated by dipping in the following disinfecting fluid:

Sulphate of zinc.....	24 ounces
Carbolic acid.....	4 " or
Common salt.....	12 "
Water.....	6 gallons

A pail or tub of this fluid should be kept in the sick-room, and into this all clothing, blankets, sheets, towels, etc., used about the patient or in the room, should be dropped immediately after use, and before being removed from the room. They should then be immediately and thoroughly boiled. The ticking of beds and pillows used by the patient should be treated in the same manner; and the contents, if hair or feathers, should be thoroughly baked in an oven. If this cannot be done, they should be destroyed by fire, as should, in any event, all straw, husk, moss, or "excelsior" filling. The clothing of nurses should be thoroughly fumigated and cleansed before it is taken from the house, and, better still, burned, if circumstances will admit.

12. If, from neglect or delay in enforcing precautionary measures, the disease shows a tendency to become epidemic, the public and private schools should be closed, church services suspended, and public assemblages of people, as at shows, circuses, theatres, fairs, or other gatherings, should be prohibited.

Finally, the above precautions, if faithfully carried out, may be confidently relied upon to prevent the spread of the disease, and the intelligent confidence thus secured will prevent panic and the inhuman treatment of the afflicted, which so often arises from ignorance and unreasoning fear.

A copy of this circular should be left in every house where there is a case of small-pox; and the local health authorities are charged with a strict enforcement of the rules. In view of the prevalence of the disease at the present time, and the recognized difficulty of a positive diagnosis in every case, any reasonable doubt should be resolved in favor of wise precaution. It is by no means necessary that a case should present all the typical symptoms in order to initiate a malignant epidemic—even a mild case, with little or no eruption, may do this. Local health authorities cannot too strongly insist upon this point.

By order of the Board:

JOHN H. RAUCH, M. D.,

Secretary.